

**The George Washington University
Campus Plan 2006-2025**

Letter of Support

September 25, 2006

**ZONING COMMISSION
District of Columbia**

Carol Mitten
Chair, DC Zoning Commission
441 4th Street NW
Suite 200 South
Washington DC 20001

CASE NO. _____

EXHIBIT NO. 118

Chair Mitten:

It is with great excitement and enthusiasm that I greet you and the DC Zoning Commission in an effort to convey my extreme, and very-much justifiable support for the 2006-2025 GW Campus Plan (GW Campus Plan Cases #06-11 and #6-12). Since the Spring Semester of last year I have been an active member in a grassroots effort made by both student and University leaders to inform our GW community of the proposed changes included in the new Campus Plan. Campaign GW, founded by Audai Shakour and Meredith Wolf, our past SA President and Vice President of Community affairs respectively, is our way of getting the word out about the new plan, the community's concerns, and hearings such as this as well.

It is from this experience with Campaign GW over the last 5 to 6 months, that I feel both qualified and privileged to speak to you in regards to the University's sincere and notable efforts to not only inform students of "proposed change," but to actually gather feedback and input on what they envision for the future of GW as an institution of learning and excellence. It was at one of the many Campus Plan Informational sessions at my residency last year, that I was introduced to the prospects of pursuing extensive development to further the future of GWU and the District of Columbia, through Square 54 and a new Campus Plan.

As I trust it is apparent to you that GW has worked with the community on revising and modifying the Campus Plan, it may not be so apparent how GW has incorporated students in the process directly. I would like to highlight how GW has not just blindly created a campus plan without considering outside sources, as has been unfortunately implied by some community based interest groups.

Information sessions, led by esteemed and informed leaders of this University, including our very own executive Vice President and Treasurer Lou Katz, Director of Real Estate Planning and Development Alicia O'Neil, Managing Director of Real Estate Planning and Development Sherry Rutherford, and Senior Advisor for Communications and Outreach (EVP & T) John Ralls, enabled students to learn of the plan's intricacies. Questions, concerns, suggestions, and feedback flowed from students across campus. And the University, in conjunction with student leaders responded quickly. A mass survey on Square 54 development and the Campus Plan was instituted online, and the opportunity for students to voice their ideas were welcomed.

Forums and the survey in conjunction with intimate meetings between student leaders and the Office of Planning resulted in what I consider an excellent and notable collaboration between students and the Administration. As an example, you will see in the Campus Plan there is a proposed new addition to the existing School Without Walls facility. The plan includes the construction of a new Undergraduate Residence Hall to house 474 students with 178 parking spaces. The key in this plan is the contextual design and rear courtyard. The design of the living facility are all single bedrooms with shared living areas: this type of housing-design, in addition to the accessibility to the center of campus provided, was designed as a response and outgrowth from feedback provided by over 1,000 students in the online survey I spoke to prior. This stands as one of the countless examples of the University working with students.

On an even more personal level, just thinking about my summer, I recount countless emails and telephone-conferences with the University and other Campaign GW leaders over changes occurring to the campus plan: including the exciting compromises made with the Historical Preservation Society. In addition, we discussed Streetscape Plans as they were actually being developed. Funny as it may seem, but some of the ideas thrown out over the phone on lighting, brickwork, and benches (all intricate details that provide for our campus

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environment greatly) materialized within the months after they were brought up by a friend of mine and Campaign GW leader, Casey Pond. In short, our ideas were heard, considered, and implemented... and for this I thank the University and hope you too recognize and appreciate their role in creating a plan that pulls from the knowledge, concerns, experience, and minds of all members in our District community: especially, from my end, and what I find as the bulk of what GW is about: it's students, that will one day contribute to America and the world as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Capp". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Nicole Capp
Leading Member, Campaign GW